



## Staff Report

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To: Planning & Zoning Commission

From: Planning Staff

Report: October 23, 2018

Meeting: November 6, 2018

Item: Public Hearing - Proposed Changes to Title 9, Chapter 5: Off Street Parking & Loading Facilities

### General Information

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|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Requested Action:</b>         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Take public testimony on the proposed changes to Title 9, Chapter 5</li><li>2. Deliberate and make a recommendation to the Sandpoint City Council</li></ol>  |
| <b>Purpose:</b>                  | Originally brought to Planning Commission from City Council Strategic Planning efforts and due to parking minimum requirement barriers for commercial and residential development, staff, the Commission, and City have worked to revise nearly all parts of the ordinance in order to holistically reconcile older aspects of code with more recent changes, basing them on a comparative analysis of various other cities in the state and region.  |
| <b>Included in Staff Report:</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Background</li><li>2. Relevant Comprehensive Plan Objectives</li><li>3. Overview of Primary Draft Changes</li><li>4. Suggested Motion</li></ol>  |
| <b>Attached:</b>                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Title 9, Chapter 5 with proposed changes shown</li><li>2. Title 9, Chapter 5 – clean copy with changes</li><li>3. Comparison doc with minimum and maximum parking space requirements (where there are requirements) from the Cities of Ketchum, Whitefish, McCall, Coeur d’Alene and Spokane.</li><li>4. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from 6/5/18, 6/19/18, 7/17/18, 8/7/18, 8/21/18 and 10/2/18 and the City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes from 9/19/18</li><li>5. Published Meeting Notice</li></ol> |

## Background

The proposed changes to the off-street parking requirements are a result of six workshops by the Planning and Zoning Commission and one workshop by the City Council. The amendments were prompted by the strategic planning priorities of the City Council regarding affordable housing challenges and due also to several commercial and mixed use projects just outside of the current core deregulated zone that have been stalled or deemed unfeasible due to off-street parking requirements. This series of amendments constitute a substantial overhaul of the chapter. The process has resulted in reconciling older amendments with newer changes made through the years with the additional goals of adding clarity and re-organization as well as evaluating the ordinance holistically in relation to the goals and objectives of the Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan.

The last time the off-street parking code was substantially revised was in 2009. Those amendments reduced parking requirements for residential uses city-wide from 2 spaces per unit to 1.4 spaces per unit. At that same time, parking minimums for buildings within the boundaries of First Avenue, Cedar Street, Fifth Avenue and Pine Street (the downtown core) plus one-half (1/2) block extending outward were eliminated.

The elimination of parking minimum requirements within and just outside of the downtown core has allowed for building use changes and expansions that would have likely not been feasible otherwise. Some examples include Joel's Mexican Restaurant expansion on Church St., the Pend d'Oreille Winery (Bellwoods) building expansion on Cedar St., The Hive use change and remodel on First Ave. as well as the Kochava Mobile Analytics Headquarters remodel and use change. These downtown projects represent several million dollars of investments (with a correlating increase in commercial property tax base) within the core since the elimination of parking minimums.

The 2005 Hudson Parking Study for the City of Sandpoint showed that a total of 1,616 off-street parking spaces existed within the defined study area (see Figure 1). Based on an internal analysis and assuming that each space, including landscaping and drive aisles, takes up an average of 413 SF (based on a comparison of 7 lots downtown), staff has estimated a total of 1,845 current off-street parking spaces in the same defined area.

In discussion with local land owners and developers, several other projects located just outside of the downtown core within the Commercial A zone have been discussed but have run into issues regarding change of use or new development infill opportunities because of current parking requirements.

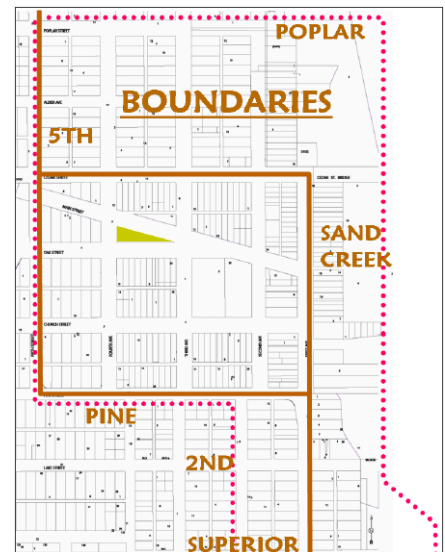


Figure 1 - 2005 Hudson Parking Study Area (1,616 total off-street spaces)

A growing list of cities within the region have eliminated, at least to a degree, parking minimums within their jurisdiction including Spokane, WA Ketchum, ID, Twin Falls, ID, Bozeman, MT, Billings, MT, Colville, WA, and Yakima, WA. See Figure 2 for a partial list of Cities that have eliminated parking minimums in at least part of the jurisdiction (primarily in Downtown Areas, based on sampling of various cities on this list).

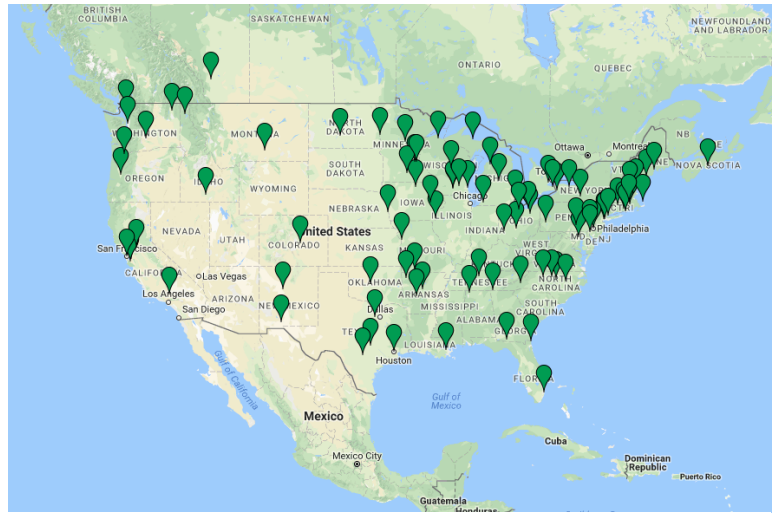


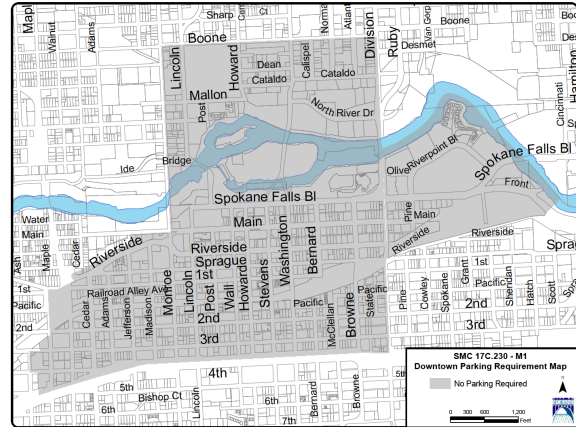
Figure 2 - Cities with parking deregulation – Source: strongtowns.org

**Potential Benefits to parking deregulation:****Tax Base:**

Parking lots do not generate much tax base which affects the City's ability to maintain levels of service.

**Historic Preservation**

Parking requirements render the traditional development pattern of areas like downtown impossible, absent an abundance of structured parking facilities.



**Figure 3 - Deregulated Parking in Spokane, WA**

**Walkability and Bikeability:**

Excess parking lots, particularly within commercial districts spread the city out geographically which necessitates or encourages car travel rather than other modes such as walking or biking.

**Vibrancy and Business Viability:**

Outside of peak times, parking lots sit as unused space that hinders the opportunity for vibrancy in commercial areas. Mandated parking minimums prohibit opportunities for small business development or mixed use buildings which is contrary to the traditional development pattern of Sandpoint's commercial districts.

**Funding a Parking Structure Downtown and other Improvements:**

In context of a broader public parking enforcement program, eliminating a mandate for parking minimums may help create sufficient demand to finance a parking structure (estimated to cost an average of \$24,000 per space<sup>1</sup>) or other improvements using fees and fines for paid parking at some point in the future.

**Challenges to Parking Deregulation**

If density is maximized over the course of subsequent years of development, more parking may be pushed onto streets and other public parking areas. This could add to enforcement service challenges which may or may not be paid for solely by additional property tax base.

<sup>1</sup> Rider Levett Bucknall, Quarterly Construction Cost Report, Third Quarter (2012).

## Relevant Comprehensive Plan Objectives

### Community Design:

#### Preserving Traditional Neighborhoods

Sandpoint residents value their traditional neighborhoods, including the Downtown and areas such as Sixth Avenue. The community recognizes the need to preserve not just individual historic buildings, but the traditional scale and feeling of the city's original neighborhoods platted by Farmin.

#### Beauty and Character

Residents of Sandpoint appreciate the town's natural setting. They also love the overall beauty and character of the town's built environment. Residents respect the work, investment and commitment by past generations to establish that character, and recognize the need to maintain the town's built legacy. Current residents of Sandpoint wish to add to the built environment in a way that is equal to or better than past works, insisting that new additions harmonize with the town's character and contribute to the long-term success of the City.

#### Transportation Diversity

Sandpoint's non-motorized accessibility is expected to pay dividends in many ways. Cycling is an option that many residents enjoy on a daily basis, due to the community's compact layout and slower paced, dispersed traffic patterns. The numerous features that enhance the pedestrian experience also beautify the town and help make it more sustainable. Residents or workers living a greater distance from the town center are able to utilize "park and ride" facilities as part of their commute. In Sandpoint, transportation diversity is valued, and no one means of transportation overwhelms the others.

#### Parking

Improved parking conditions are recognized as key to the community's success. The town is committed to applying creative, cost-effective methods to address public parking needs while preserving our traditional urban environment.

### Goal CD-1: Historic Town

- A. Ensure that all commercial, single and multi-family development respect the town's unique historic character, in architecture, density and in site planning.
- B. Facilitate reinvestment in and adaptive reuse of historic structures, districts and neighborhoods.

### Goal CD-3: Quality Growth

- E. Reduce the amount of land devoted to surface parking, including but not limited to encouraging parking structures in CA-4 and especially CA-5 districts.

### Goal T-1: Walkability

- B. Develop parking requirements that reduce the visual prominence of automobiles.

### Goal E-4: Downtown Revitalization

- B. Encourage residential uses on the second story and above.
- G. Encourage preservation of historic buildings.
- I. Encourage first floor restaurants and diverse retail utilization.



## Overview of Primary Draft Changes

### 1. Parking Deregulated Area (§9-5-1)

Planning Commission has recommended expanding the de-regulated zone minimally and only for *non-residential uses*. See below map:



**2. Parking Demand Analysis Relief Valve (§9-5-1)**

While still requiring parking minimum and maximum standards, this provision, which previously required commission action, can allow for a variance in minimum or maximum requirements in code if a parking demand analysis by a registered traffic engineer in the state of Idaho is conducted.

**3. Joint Use (Shared Parking Reduction) Provision Changes (§9-5-3)**

The current Provision allows for the joint use of parking areas for non-residential uses only. Because residential parking demand generally peaks during evening hours while office and retail use places a demand on parking during daytime hours, the non-residential qualifier has been lifted similar to ordinances of other cities researched (Ketchum, ID / Phoenixville, PA / Spokane, WA / Whitefish, MT). This provision would also be administered by staff with standards met and documentation required.

**4. Hard Surfacing (§9-5-6)**

Allowance for waiving the hard surfacing requirement by the City Engineer within the Industrial General Zone.

**5. Screening and/or Landscaping (§9-5-13)**

Various cleanups and refinements, including

- a. Clarifying canopy coverage requirements for lots over 30 spaces
- b. Revised planting standards.
- c. Clarity and revisions as to when landscaping standards apply to existing parking lots.
- d. Requirement that Industrial General Zone only meet the minimum 10% landscaping requirements. *NOTE: The Tree Committee has recommended eliminating this exemption.*

**6. Dimensional Standards for Parking Lot and Driveway Design (§9-5-15)**

In review of other municipal codes (Boise, ID / Ketchum, ID / Whitefish, MT / San Francisco, CA) and a review of parking space dimensions within *Planning and Urban Design Standards* (American Planning Association, 2006) adjustments have been made to some of these standards, adding 30 degree angled parking as an option and providing more detail by adding curb length per stall and parking space depth.

**7. Minimum and Maximum Parking Space Requirements (§9-5-16)**

For areas outside of the any deregulated area, several changes to the use table have been changed, based on a comparative analysis (attached).

Residential (Min. Requirements):

Revised minimum parking standards for residential uses, creating a provision for multifamily units under 800 sf (1 space required, if over 800sf, 1.4 spaces required as is currently), and requiring 2 spaces for detached single family units in excess of 3 bedrooms. Additionally, ADUs and Cottage developments were added to the use table (1 space per unit).

Commercial / Entertainment and Recreation / Institutional / Schools /  
and Industrial Requirements:

Various amendments made based on a comparative analysis of various cities (attached) for parking minimums. NOTE: *Parking maximum requirements (120% of the minimum) apply only to commercial, entertainment and recreational uses.*

**8. Parking Credits (New Section 9-5-17)**

Incorporation of parking credits:

- a. .25 miles of a bus stop (up to 20% reduction)
- b. Deed restricted affordable housing units (up to 20% reduction)
- c. Motorcycle parking (up to 2)
- d. Bicycle parking (up to 2 – no change)

**9. In Lieu Parking Fees (§9-5-19)**

Elimination of non-residential requirement, application city-wide as opposed to the downtown area only and various other refinements

**10. Various other cleanups and refinements including, but not limited to proximity of parking spaces, access and maneuvering area section, drainage, lighting, and wheel blocks.**



## Suggested Motion

### *If approving:*

"I move the Sandpoint Planning Commission, after consideration of the criteria and relevant standards of Idaho Code and Sandpoint City Code recommend to the Sandpoint City Council that they approve and adopt the proposed amendments to Title 9, Chapter 5: Off Street Parking & Loading Facilities of Sandpoint City Code.

*[With the following amendments, as applicable]*

The reasons for this decision are:

1. Particular consideration has been given to the effects of these proposed changes upon the health, safety and welfare of the residents and the delivery of services by any political subdivision providing public services, including school districts, within the City of Sandpoint.
2. Staff has followed the notice procedures applicable to zone changes contained in Idaho Code 67-6511 and Sandpoint City Code Title 9, Chapter 9.
3. The proposed amendments are in accordance with the goals and policies of the Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan.

### *If denying:*

"I move the Sandpoint Planning Commission, after consideration of the criteria and relevant standards of Idaho Code and Sandpoint City Code recommend to the Sandpoint City Council that they DENY the proposed amendments to Title 9, Chapter 5: Off Street Parking & Loading Facilities of Sandpoint City Code.

The reasons for this decision are:

1. Particular consideration has been given to the effects of these proposed changes upon the health, safety and welfare of the residents and the delivery of services by any political subdivision providing public services, including school districts, within the City of Sandpoint.
2. Staff has followed the notice procedures applicable to zone changes contained in Idaho Code 67-6511 and Sandpoint City Code Title 9, Chapter 9.
3. The proposed amendments are not in accordance with the goals and policies of the Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan.

### *Other options:*

If the Commission is not ready to render a decision, other options include:

1. Continue the public hearing to a time certain
2. Continue deliberations (after closing the public hearing) to a time certain
3. Send the ordinance back to workshop and schedule another public hearing at a future date